

“General Vang Pao and our Hmong Veterans fought shoulder to shoulder with American soldiers during the Vietnam war,”“Many paid the ultimate sacrifice, and our nation owes a debt of gratitude to General Vang Pao and these patriotic individuals. Their service should be honored. said Costa.

“I am very disappointed that the Administration has seen fit to be so insensitive to General Vang Pao’s widow, family, and our community on the first day of his funeral service by denying him burial in Arlington National Cemetery. There is a precedent for the approval of these waivers for non-US military personnel. General Vang Pao clearly meets the tests required of time, service, and loyalty to our country. He should have been granted this waiver.”

Major General Vang Pao led the Royal Lao Army during the Secret War in Laos, fighting against the People’s Army of Vietnam in cooperation with the CIA and United States military forces. These forces numbered in the tens of thousands and conducted direct missions against Communist forces and North Vietnamese supporters. Bravely leading thousands of soldiers in a guerilla war, Vang Pao became a hero due to his leadership and dedication.

Immigrating to the United States in May of 1975, Major General Vang Pao was instrumental in negotiating the resettlement of thousands of his fellow Hmong. Vang Pao continued his leadership after his exit from military service. He was active in fostering US-Lao relations, and combating human rights abuses abroad. The General passed away Thursday January 6th after a battle with pneumonia.